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The divorces for 1884 in France are for the last four months of the year, and the increase in this and the succeeding year is due to the passage of new divorce laws. The returns for the year 1880 in Prussia are incomplete.

In Prussia there has been a steady increase in the number of marriages, and in France a slight decrease. Out of 1000 inhabitants, 7 marry in France and 8 in Prussia. By the increase of births over deaths during the ten years, 1880-89, Prussia has gained nearly 2,800,000 in population over France. This threatened depopulation of their country has alarmed the French, and as a remedy it has been proposed to exempt from taxation the heads of families having a certain number of children.

F. C. NORTON.

SUICIDES IN PRUSSIA AND ITALY.

The following paragraphs are taken from the *Zeitschrift des Kön. Preus. Stat. Bureaus*, 1891, Nos. 1-2.

Although the year 1888 had shown the smallest number of suicides in Prussia since 1883, an increase again took place in 1889. This, however, is so slight that the year 1889 is still behind the years 1883-87 in this respect. The following table shows the number.

According to this there are annually nearly four times as many males as females who commit suicide; moreover, the decrease in the inclination of the population to commit suicide is much more noticeable among the males than among the females.

SUICIDES IN PRUSSIA.

Year.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Out of every 100,000 Living.		
				Males.	Females.	Total.
1883	4,933	1,238	6,171	36	9	22
1884	4,691	1,209	5,900	34	8	21
1885	4,811	1,217	6,028	34	8	21
1886	5,047	1,165	6,212	36	8	22
1887	4,703	1,195	5,898	33	8	21
1888	4,255	1,138	5,393	30	8	19
1889	4,430	1,185	5,615	31	8	19

In Prussia, in spite of the great obstacles which are opposed to the inquiry as to the motives for suicide, only a comparatively small number remain unknown. In the year 1889 this was the case in only 18.6 per cent of all suicides,—about the same proportion as in the previous years.

The causes of suicides in Prussia were as follows :—

	1883.	1884.	1885.	1886.	1887.	1888.	1889.
Insanity.....	1,505	1,464	1,582	1,671	1,559	1,468	1,429
Weariness of life.....	655	651	611	607	592	443	537
Bodily ailments.....	446	459	477	504	519	508	564
Passion.....	175	173	168	182	193	177	182
Crime.....	638	582	659	665	606	462	474
Grief.....	29	18	23	29	32	19	31
Trouble.....	814	770	766	733	646	662	643
Repentance, shame.....	489	465	435	501	455	487	500
Anger and quarrels.....	208	148	145	146	181	136	151
Other causes.....	56	48	62	71	29	37	61
Unknown causes.....	1,156	1,122	1,100	1,103	1,086	994	1,043

Thus, about a quarter of all suicides are undoubtedly caused by insanity, while the greater part of the remainder are also due to causes which work more or less on the mind, such as weariness of life, crime, trouble, repentance, shame, etc. But if the two sexes are separated, important distinctions are brought out, as the following table will show. In every 100 persons who committed suicide the distribution between the sexes was as follows :—

Cause.	1885.		1887.		1889.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
Insanity.....	21.9	43.3	22.7	41.1	21.9	38.6
Weariness of life...	10.4	9.0	10.8	7.0	10.0	7.8
Bodily ailments....	7.8	8.4	8.7	9.1	9.6	11.6
Passion.....	2.3	4.9	2.5	6.5	2.5	6.2
Crime.....	12.9	3.1	12.3	2.4	10.1	1.3
Grief.....	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.8	0.5	0.9
Trouble.....	13.8	8.3	11.6	8.5	12.7	6.8
Repentance, shame	7.3	6.8	7.7	7.9	9.0	8.7
Anger and quarrels	2.6	1.7	2.9	3.5	2.8	2.3

Insanity, therefore, as a cause of suicide occurs much more frequently among females than among males; while among the latter weariness of life, crime, and trouble are more frequently the motives for self-destruction than among females; and even on account of bodily ailments, passions, and grief, females voluntarily end their lives in greater numbers than males.

In ITALY special attention has been given for a long time to the suicides of young persons, although the subject of the suicides of students has not been investigated so thoroughly as in Prussia since 1883.

Italian statistics distinguish two age classes of youthful suicides, namely, those under 15 years of age, and those from 15 to 20. According to official documents, the total number of the former amounted, in the years 1870-79, to 51, of whom 41 were males and 10 females. The total number of those from 15 to 20, in the same time, was 501, of whom 350 were males, and 145 females.

Since 1880 the suicides of young persons in the Italian Kingdom have been as follows:—

	Under 15 Years.			15-20 Years.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
1880	3	...	3	28	21	49
1881	7	...	7	61	21	82
1882	3	4	7	56	19	75
1883	3	...	3	67	30	97
1884	4	1	5	63	18	81
1885	4	...	4	57	30	87
1886	6	1	7	59	22	81
1887	2	4	6	64	29	93
1888	1	2	3	64	27	91
Total.	33	12	45	519	217	736

Thus, in the suicides under 15 years of age, the yearly average sank from 5.1 in the 10 years 1870-79 to 5.0 in the nine years 1880-88. On the other hand, the yearly average of suicides of those 15-20 years old, in which the school-examination question played a great part, rose from 50.1 cases in the first ten years to 81.8 in the last period.

F. C. HOLMES.